

VZCZCXRO7528
PP RUEHDBU
DE RUEHBUL #0686/01 0460508
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
P 150508Z FEB 06
FM AMEMBASSY KABUL
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8351
INFO RUCNAFG/AFGHANISTAN COLLECTIVE
RHEHAAA/NSC WASHDC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC
RUEKJCS/CJCS WASHDC
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 5544
RUMICEA/USCENTCOM INTEL CEN MACDILL AFB FL
RHMFISS/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL
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RUEATRS/US TREASURY WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 04 KABUL 000686

SIPDIS

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DEPT FOR SA/FO AMBASSADOR QUINN, S/CT, SA/A, G KATE
FRIEDRICH, G/IWI CHARLOTTE PONTICELLI AND DIANNE GRAHAM
NSC FOR AHARRIMAN, KAMEND
CENTCOM FOR POLAD, CG CFC-A, CG CJTF-76
TREASURY FOR LMC DONALD, WBALDRIDGE, APARAMESWARAN, ABAUKOL
STATE PLEASE PASS USAID FOR AID/ANE, AID/DCHA/DG

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/14/2016

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PINR](#) [KDEM](#) [AF](#)

SUBJECT: POLITICAL GROUPS IN PARLIAMENT FAIL TO TAKE HOLD

REF: A. KABUL 275

[1](#)B. KABUL 417

Classified By: DCM RICHARD NORLAND FOR REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D)

[1](#)1. (SBU) SUMMARY. The Wolesi Jirga (lower house of the Afghan National Assembly) has decided to defer formation of political groups and move directly to committee membership selection. The Meshrano Jirga (upper house), which announced its formal political groups last week, is considering disbanding them since they have not aided in committee formation. END SUMMARY.

Wolesi Jirga Bypasses Political Groups

[1](#)2. (SBU) Contrary to its initial decision to form internal political groups prior to forming committees (REF A), the Wolesi Jirga (WJ) has decided to defer the establishment of political groups until after the Afghan New Year (March 21). Instead of dividing seats on committees among the different political groups, the leadership of the Wolesi Jirga is in the process of deciding who will serve on which committee based on MPs' work experience and stated preferences (SEPTEL). In order to defer the creation of political gQups, the Wolesi Jirga needs only to revise its internal rules of procedure.

[1](#)3. (C) In a meeting with POLOFF February 9, Second Deputy Speaker Fawzia Koofi stated that one reason why political group formation was delayed was because many MPs, unwilling to offend colleagues who were asking for their support, signed up as members of several political groups. Membership in those political groups that did try to form was based primarily on ties of friendship or acquaintance rather than common ideology, since no group had a different platform than the others.

[1](#)4. (C) Rumors flew fast and hard during the weeks when groups were under consideration about who had support from whom, and the number of people who were claimed as members of groups

was far greater than the number of members of Parliament.
Here are some of the more credible rumors:

- Ishaq Gailani told POLOFF on January 31 that he had gathered 20 people into a group called "National Understanding" (Tafahom-e Melli - the same name as Qanooni's former coalition).
- Mohaqgeq reportedly tried to form a group, but was not able to gather enough people. Instead, Engineer Abbas, who was in the United States during most of the wars, drew more Hazara support.
- According to Koofi, Sayyaf faced similar problems, in that he began group formation late and most of his erstwhile supporters had committed elsewhere before he asked them to join. Koofi said that she joined a group called "Reform."
- MP Sharifa Zormati said in a meeting with POLOFF on January 30 that former communist Noorulhaq Olumi, and political parties Afghan Mellat (Pashtun nationalist) and Mahaz-e Melli (led by Pir Gailani) approached her to join their groups.
- Jamil Karzai, head of the Youth Party, was reportedly forming a group and could be seen courting members in the Parliament cafeteria every day.

Meshrano Jirga Forms Groups, but Committees Stalled

15. (C) The Meshrano Jirga did go forward with group formation, but has not found the groups to be a useful means of organization. Eight groups formed, including the group of

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MPs who chose to remain independent (see full list para 9). Most of these groups hovered in size around the ten-member minimum required, but one - "Hamnazar" - gathered 30 members together. These groups all met the basic requirements of not being based on gender or ethnicity, although some have more of an ethnic or regional bias than others. Several of the most well-known members of the Meshrano Jirga (such as Fahim Khan) and its leadership declined to join a group. While the house was able to form groups, several MPs described the groups as having little meaning and likely to change in the future. For example, when asked whether the groups would become parties some day, MJ MP Roshan Alokzai described them as working groups, with no real political meaning.

16. (C) Despite having formed political groups, committee selection in the Meshrano Jirga (MJ) has stalled over the issue of committee leadership. Members, many dissatisfied with the leadership of the MJ (REFB), are seeking committee chairmanships in order to secure more influence over proceedings. Political groups have not aided in the resolution of this issue; instead they have become another source of debate. MJ MPs report significant discontent with the "Hamnazar" group, made up of many (but by no means all) former commanders. Several female MPs stated that this group has adopted strong-arm tactics and was seeking special preference in committee leadership seats based on its larger size.

Comment

17. (C) The decision to include political groups as a concept in the rules of procedure for Parliament was an international one, supported by Karzai administration, designed to provide structure in the absence of political parties. It is therefore not much of a surprise that the idea of groups has proven of little use to members of Parliament themselves. Indeed, since the primary power of political groups was to be in determining committee membership, the WJ decision to form committees without groups calls into doubt whether formal political groups will ever be formed in the Wolesi Jirga.

18. (C) Political parties on the whole are still viewed highly negatively in Afghanistan, and the poor reaction of MPs to political groups indicates it may still be too soon to hope for the emergence of a stable party system. In the Wolesi Jirga, they have managed to successfully organize themselves for the short term through strong leadership and by making decisions by consensus, and will soon have committees to provide additional structure. In the Meshrano Jirga, the creation of groups has failed to substitute for firm leadership and inclusive decision-making. A party structure, while necessary to most parliamentary systems, is likely to evolve only gradually in the Afghan National Assembly and efforts to create one artificially are not likely to succeed in the short term. END COMMENT.

List of Meshrano Jirga Political Groups

19. (U) Hamnazar (Roughly: "Same view")

Engineer Mohammad Afzal Ahmadzai (leader, Kabul, Pashtun)
Najiba Rukhshani (F, Nimroz, Baluch)
Sidiqa Balkhi (F, Kabul, Hazara)
Belqis Kochi (F, Faryab, Kuchi/Pashtun)
Haji Nazar Mohammad Faqiri (Baghlan, Kuchi/Pashtun)
Kubra Aman (F, Nangarhar, Pashai)
Qamar Khosti (F, Khost, Pashtun)
Haji Shah Nawaz Khan (Ghazni, Pashtun)
Haji Mohammad Isa Khan Shinwari (Nangarhar, Pashtun)
Dr. Burhannudin Shinwari (2nd Deputy Speaker, Nangarhar, Pashtun)
Mawlawi Arsallah Rahmani (Paktika, Pashtun)

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Dr. Abdul Wali Ahmadzai (Logar, Pashtun)
Sultan Jan Khaksar (Logar, Pashtun)
Attaullah Khan (Helmand, Pashtun)
Taiba Zahidi (F, Herat, Tajik)
Reda Azimi (F, Parwan, Tajik)
Sara Surkhabi (F, Faryab, Uzbek)
Mawlawi Aminoldin Muzafari (Kapisa)
Haji Saber Khan (Khost)
Dr. Mirbat Khan Mangal (Khost)
Abdul Khaliq Hussaini (Laghman)
Haji Mokaram Khan Nasiri (Laghman)
Dr. Shah Bibi (Nangarhar)
Norullah Ma'amar (Nuristan)
Dr. Bakhtar Aminzai (Paktia)
Haji Mohammad Laiq (Paktia)
Haji Khan Mohammad Khagai (Paktika)
Mohammad Hassan Ghazizada (Paktika)
Sami Jan Shirzada (Wardak)
Gangaram (Kandahar) - also joined "Solh aworan"

Esteqlal (Independence)

Mohammad Omar Shairzad (Kandahar, head of group)
Haji Maboob Khan (Helmand, Pashtun)
Mullah Shir Mohammad Akhundzadah (Helmand, Pashtun)
Doctor Zalmay (Zabul, Pashtun)
Mawlawi Abdul Hafiz Zahir (Takhar, Uzbek)
Mohtaramah (F, Badghis)
Hedayatullah Riahi (Bamyan)
Al-haj Mohammad Alam Izdyar (Panjshir)
Qazi Abdul Hai (Sar-e Pol)
Mohammad Hanif (Uruzgan)
Najiba Hussaini (F, Uruzgan, Hazara)

Misaq-e Melli (National Convention/Unity)

Abdul Saboor Farid (Kapisa, Tajik, head of group)
Roshan Alokzai (F, Kunar, Pashtun)
Abdul Kabir Marzban (Takhar, Tajik)
Kubra Mustafawi (F, Wardak)
Haji Sayed Daud Nasiri (Dai Kundi)

Haji Mohammad Baqir Sharifi (Dai Kundi)
Ghulam Farooq Farahi (Farah)
Dr. Ibrahim Hayatullah (Ghor)
Mohammad Naser Ataiee (Herat)
Noor Mohammad Kafil (Kapisa)

Payam-e Solh (Message of Peace)

Al-haj Doctor Mohammad Omar Samim (Herat, head of group)
Nasrin Parsa (F, Kabul, Hazara)
Dr. Abdul Ahmad Zahedi Niqala (Ghazni, Hazara)
Haji Sayed Ahmad Barakzai (Kandahar, Pashtun)
Nafas Gul Khedmat (Farah, Tajik)
Qazi Soraya (Sar-e Pol)
Mohammad Rangin Mashkawani (Badghis)
Sayed Mohammad Muhsin (Ghor)
Fazal Karim Mahmoudi (Nimroz)
Haji Khadem Hussain (Parwan)

Hamayat az Hoquq-e Mardom (Support for the People's Rights)

Al-haj Sulaiman Yari (Wardak, Hazara, head of group)
Ahmad Shah Ramazan (Balkh, Hazara)
Bebe Haji Nafisa Sultani (F, Kabul, Pashtun)
Abdul Baqi Baryal (Ghazni, Pashtun)
Sohaila Sharifi (F, Ghazni, Qizilbash)
Sayed Abdul Basir Ahmadi (Badakhshan, Tajik)
Khadija Hussaini (F, Samangan, Turkmen)
Halia Qazizada Qardash (F, Faryab, Uzbek)
Engineer Mohammad Hashem Aurtaq (Faryab, Uzbek)
Mohammad Yunus Shirin Agha (Baghlan)
Haji Doctor Mohammad Zaman Bahlol (Bamyan)
Amir Saadullah (Takhar)

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Sedaqat (Honesty)

Haji Faqir Mohammad (Samangan, head of group)
Haji Tordia Khan (Badakhshan, Pamiri)
Abdul Qadir Dostam (Jowzjan, Uzbek)
Abdul Satar (Baghlan)
Sayed Hamed Agha (Jowzjan)
Haji Sakhi (Kunar)
Haji Saleh Mohammad (Kunar)
Engineer Arif (Panjshir)
Kwaja Mahmood Rashid (Parwan)

Solh Aworan (Peacebringers)

Haji Abdul Ghani (Balkh, head of group)
Ustad Qurban Ali Urfani (Bamyan, Hazara)
Safar Mohammad Kakar (Kunduz, Pashtun)
Haji Mohammad Hassan Hotak (Zabul, Pashtun)
Muslima Hussaini (F, Badakhshan, Tajik)
Qazi Sadullah Abu Aman (Badakhshan, Tajik)
Haji Abdul Hamid (Kunduz, Tajik)
Abdullah Naqshbandi (Balkh)
Haji Mohammad Akbar Wahdat (Faryab)
Mohammad Anwari (Nimroz)
Haji Khairoo Jan (Uruzgan)

Independent MPs

Sebghatullah Mojaddedi (Speaker)
Sayed Hamed Gailani (1st Deputy Speaker)
(Marshall) Fahim Khan
Humaira Nemati (F, Balkh, Tajik)
Mahbooba Hoqoqmal (F, Kabul, Tajik)
Abdullah Haqaiqi (Parwan, Tajik)
Pir Saheb Ibrahim Gailani (Zabul)
Al-haj Shair Mohammad Nuristani (Nuristan)
NEUMANN